

REMARKS

Claims 17, 33 and 34 are pending. By this amendment, claims 8-16, 19 and 25-32 are canceled, and claims 33 and 34 are amended. No new matter has been added. Applicants expressly reserve the right to file one or more continuation applications directed to the subject matter of the canceled claims. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and timely withdrawal of the pending rejections for the reasons discussed below.

Present Amendment is proper for entry

Applicants respectfully submit that the instant amendment is proper for entry after final rejection. Applicants note that no question of new matter is presented nor are any new issues raised in entering the instant amendment of the claims and that no new search would be required. Moreover, Applicants submit that the instant amendment places the application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants request the Examiner to enter the instant amendment, consider the merits of the same, and indicate the allowability of the present application and each of the pending claims. Applicants note, in particular, that all of the rejected claims have been canceled and that the allowable claims have been presented in independent form. Accordingly, the only remaining claims are claims which are or should be indicated to be allowed.

Allowed Claims

Applicants appreciate the indication that claim 17 is allowed and that claims 33 and 34 contain allowable subject matter. Accordingly, as Applicants have presented

claims 33 and 34 in independent form and canceled the rejected claims, Applicants submit that all pending claims are in condition for allowance.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejections

Over Becker with Chen

Claims 8-14, 19 and 25-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,153,501 to BECKER in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0136583 issued to CHEN et al.

Applicants traverse this basis of rejection for the reasons already made of record. However, in view of the fact that claims 8-14, 19 and 25-30 have been canceled in order to advance prosecution of the allowed/allowable claims, Applicants submit that this basis of rejection is now moot.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the above-noted rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn.

Over Becker with Chen and Pan

Claims 15, 16, 31 and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,153,501 to BECKER in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0136583 issued to CHEN et al., and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,198,144 to PAN et al.

Applicants traverse this basis of rejection for the reasons already made of record. However, in view of the fact that claims 15, 16, 31 and 32 have been canceled in order to advance prosecution of the allowed/allowable claims, Applicants submit that this

basis of rejection is now moot.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the above-noted rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn.

Comments on Reasons for Allowance

In response to the Statement of Reasons for Allowance set forth in the Office Action, Applicants wish to clarify the record with respect to the basis for the patentability of the indicated claims in the present application. In this regard, while Applicants do not disagree with the Examiner's indication that certain identified features are not disclosed by the references, Applicants submit that the claims in the present application recite a combination of features, and that the basis for patentability of these claims is based on the totality of the recited features.

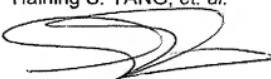
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that all of the claims are patentably distinct from the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below, if needed. Applicants hereby make a written conditional petition for extension of time, if required.

Please charge any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayment of fees to

IBM Deposit Account No. 09-0458.

Respectfully submitted,
Haining S. YANG, et. al.



Andrew M. Calderon
Reg. No. 38,093

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GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C.
1950 Roland Clarke Place
Reston, VA 20191
703-716-1191